" What is the first thing you remember ? Write that down as a start."

But for my friend's practical suggestion it is doubtful if I should ever have written a line! He relieved my anxiety about my powers of compiling a stupendous autobiography, and made me forget that writing was a new art, to rue, and that I was rather old to try my hand at a new art. My memory suddenly began to seem not so bad after all. For weeks I had hesitated between Othello's " Nothing extenuate, nor write down aught in malice," and Pilate's " What is truth ? " as my guide and my apology. Now I saw that both were too big for my modest endeavour. I was not leaving a human document for the benefit of future psychologists and historians, but telling as much of my story as I could remember to the good, living public which has been considerate and faithful to me for so many years.

How often it has made allowances for me when I was nervous on first nights 1 With what patience it has waited long and uncomfortable hours to see me ! Surely its charity would quickly cover iny literary sins.

I gave up the search for a rnotto which should express my wish to tell the truth so far as I know it, to describe things as I see them, to be faithful according to my light, not dreading the abuse of those who might see in my light nothing but darkness.

I shut up "Othello" and did not try to verify the

remark of " jesting " Pilate, The only instruction that I gave myself was to " begin at the beginning/'

E. T.